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Senate

The Senate was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Monday, December 9, 2013, at 2 p.m.

House of Representatives

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2013

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. COOK).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,

December 4, 2013.

I hereby appoint the Honorable PAUL COOK to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 3, 2013, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I came to the floor to speak about the bilateral strategic agreement and the

fact that President Karzai has refused to sign the proposal offered by the administration.

Since we have been in Afghanistan, 2,285 Americans have given their lives for our country, and 19,514 have been wounded. The time has come for Congress to understand history. From the days of Alexander the Great, to the British, to the Russians, no one has ever changed Afghanistan.

The American people are tired of the cost of war, both life and money. As I said yesterday, it is my hope that, in early 2014, the leadership of the House will permit a debate and a vote on the agreement that will obligate our country to Afghanistan for at least 10 more years. I realize that the vote will not change the agreement, because the President does have the authority, but this will give us a chance to represent the people of America who, the majority, are opposed to this agreement.

It is unacceptable that we will continue to spend billions of dollars at a time when, according to Special Inspector General John Sopko, the waste, fraud, and abuse is worse in Afghanistan today than it was 11 years ago.

We in Congress continue to cut funding for programs for the American people, but we refuse to withhold one single dollar from Karzai in Afghanistan. No wonder the American people have given Congress an approval rating of 9 percent.

It is time to end the senseless waste of American lives and American money in Afghanistan.

I want to thank Roger Simon for his editorial in today's Politico, and I

would like to read the last paragraph of his editorial. He writes:

Is this the neighborhood we want to stay in? And fight for? And throw more money at? We have achieved our goals in Afghanistan. We have won. It is time for our troops to come home. If we stay for another decade, our good war could come to a very bad end.

So, again, Mr. Speaker, it is my hope that when we get into 2014, that both parties will come together and say that we need to debate on whether this agreement for 10 years is worth one life or one dollar. And I believe it will be a vigorous debate. I think it will be good that the American people can see that we hear them as it relates to this war in Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, before I close, I have got a poster from the Greensboro News & Record dated February 27, 2011. It is the military carrying a flag-draped coffin off the back of a plane. How many more young Americans will have to go and walk the roads of Afghanistan and be killed and lose their limbs?

I hope that my colleagues in both parties will join those of us in both parties who want to have this debate on Afghanistan in 2014.

Mr. Speaker, I will close now by asking God to please bless our men in uniform, to bless the families of our men and women in uniform, and God to hold in His arms the families who have given a child dying for freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq.

THE GAS TAX

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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